

I believe that the nation-wide Do Not Call list would be a benefit everyone involved. Citizens need a place where they can spend time with their families or relax without the unwanted interruptions of someone trying to sell a product or conduct a survey. Also, people with unconventional schedules (i.e. sleep during the day) do not benefit from the restricted calling hours of 8a.m. to 9p.m. Elderly and disabled people suffer in that it may take them much time and pain to get to the phone, only to find the trouble was for a telemarketer. If people want a product, they will take the initiative to find it themselves; they do not need telemarketers to induce the need.

Small businesses must use a limited number of people and telephone lines to transact their daily business. With calls from telemarketers coming frequently, productive time is wasted answering unsolicited phone calls. In addition, telephone lines are tied up, reducing the number of potential customers that get through and resulting in lost business and money.

Consumers spend large sums of money every year on products designed to recognize and eradicate calls originating from telemarketers. Caller I.D. or call-blocking products usually prove ineffective, however, as telemarketing companies block the phone numbers they are calling from specifically to get around these devices. Obviously, if consumers are willing to spend all of this money to stop intrusion into their homes, a Do Not Call list would be welcomed and widely utilized. A national Do Not Call list is required to be effective, as getting your name on each company-specific list requires an insane amount of time.

I do not believe that the existence of Do Not Call lists is unfair to the businesses that use them as a means to drum-up business. They have the choice to employ the practice of telemarketing, but consumers do not have the equal choice to refuse unsolicited phone calls, and must accept the invasion of privacy. Sure, consumers can hang up when the sales pitch begins, but at that point they have already been inconvenienced and intruded upon.

Do Not Call lists will also help the businesses that employ telemarketing. The people that place themselves on the list obviously don't want to be bothered, and when they are either become hostile or hang up immediately. These people do not benefit the business in any way, in fact diverting attention from other customers that may be willing to listen to the sales pitch or take part in a survey. In eradicating the unwilling participants, the business can focus on the willing customers, thus reducing wasted time and increasing sales or data gathering. Also, businesses will avoid alienating potential customers due to untimely or unwanted phone calls, increasing public relations and possibly sales.

The automatic dialers that many telemarketing companies use are unfair to their targets. The automated nature of the dialers means that many more households can be reached while using fewer personnel. The number of times that we are interrupted in our personal lives increases exponentially, and we are forced to wait while recognition of the connection is made and we are transferred to a real person.

To solve these problems, I believe the creation of ONE Do Not Call list under the direction of the FTC and FCC is in order. Using one registry will save taxpayers money, in that duplicate services are not being provided. It will also save time, as consumers will only register for one list. Five years is a good time for registration renewal, as attitudes towards telemarketing don't change that quickly, and the time and personnel needed for processing lists is reduced as the renewal date is lengthened.